LIFE

And ſurpriſing

Robberies and Adventures

OF

WILLIAM PAGE

the Noted HIGHWAYMAN;

WHO

Who was tried at *Rocheſter* for robbing Cap
Farrington, near *Black Heath*, found Gu
ty, and Executed on *Pennenden Hea*
near *Maidſtone* in *Kent*, *April* 6, 1758.

WITH

An Account of his ſeveral Robberies committ
on the Highway during the Courſe of twel
Years, by an Accomplice.

With a Conſolatory Letter ſent to his Wife the Morn
of his Execution, and another to his Mother at *Hampto*

To which is added, a ſhort Account of JOHN BIR
the Soldier who was executed with *Page* for break
into the Dwelling-houſe of Mr. *Bacon* in *Rocheſter*.

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THE LIFE, &c.

William Page, otherwise *Gage*, otherwise *Williams* (for these and other Names he went by as best suited his Purpose, or the Places where he happen'd to be) was born at *Hampton* in the County of *Middlesex*, of honest and industrious Parents. His Father was Sargeman to a Coal Merchant in that Town, and was drowned in the Great Frost 1740, about *Putney Bridge*. After his death his Wife, who was a very notable industrious Woman, in order to support herself and Son, took to distilling Simple Waters, in which she was greatly encouraged by the Gentry and others both in Town and Country, where she is still living and follows the same employ. *William*, their only Son, was put to the Charity School, at *Hampton*, where he learnt to read and write, and the common Rules of Arithmetick.

When he left School he went to be an Alehouse Boy in *Hampton*, in which Capacity he did not remain long but hired himself to an Apothecary in the same Town as his Errand Boy, and behaved well in both these Places.

He had a Spirit above being a Servant, t
therefore dropt all thoughts of it, and equip
himself with Piſtols, &c, Numbers of Robbe
has he committed during the Courſe of twe
years, in ſome of which he was near loſing his
eſpecially by Lord *Downe* whom he attempted
rob, but his Lordſhip fired at him, and lodge
Ball in his Body, ſo that he was obliged to ma
off without his Booty.

But a Companion of his being taken impeach
him, and he was accordingly taken and tried
the *Old Bailey*.

William Page, otherwiſe *Williams*, otherw
Gage, was indicted for aſſaulting *William Wel*
Eſq; on the King's Highway, and putting hi
in corporal Fear and Danger of his Life, and ſtea
ing two Piſtols, value 10*s*. one Gold Watch, v
lue 6*l*. one Silk Purſe, value 2*d*. and nine Gu
neas in Gold, the Goods and Money of the ſa
John Webb, and againſt his Will, *March* 26.

John Webb. The Day mentioned in the Indi
ment I was ſtopt in my Chaiſe in *Bellfound-La*
by two Men with Crape over their Faces, I ga
them my Purſe with ten or eleven Guineas in i
and my Gold Watch. They ſaid I had mo
Money, and order'd the Boy to drive up a Lan
towards *Staines*. Having Notes about me, an
fearing they would ſearch me, I pull'd out abou
30 s. in Silver and offer'd them, but they ſaid the
ſcorn'd to take Silver. But I deſir'd them t
accept of Five Shillings for a Bowl of Punch, on
of them took it and then they made off. I ca
ſay nothing to the Priſoner, having no Idea of th
Men at all, nor even their Sizes.

John Gunnery. Servant to Mr. *Webb*, depoſe
to the ſame Fact.

He was *Acquitted*; but ordered to be detained other Felonies.

Upon one of thoſe Detainers the Court ordered n to be confined in *Newgate*, he was ſoon after ried down to *Hertford*, to take his Trial there a Robbery committed in that County.

Being called to the Bar he was arraigned and dicted for robbing Earl *F——rs* on the Road, d robbing him of two loaded Piſtols and ſome oney.

The Piſtols being produced in Court, his Lord-ip ſaid they were the Piſtols he had been robb'd on the Day mentioned in the Indictment; but uld not ſwear to the Perſons that had robbed m, they being diſguiſed with Crapes over their ces.

His Accomplice *Darwell* likewiſe depoſed that *age* and himſelf committed that Robbery.

The Landlord of the Inn, at whoſe Houſe a-ut two or three Nights before they had lain, de-oſed that they lay at his Houſe, but could ſay othing more.

But none of theſe Witneſſes coming up to a di-ct Proof of the Fact, except his Accomplice, he Jury found him *Not Guilty*.

From *Hertford* he was conveyed to *Rocheſter* to ake his Trial at the enſuing Aſſizes to be held here for the County of *Kent*, in *March* laſt.

He was there arraigned and indicted for rob-bing Captain *Farrington* (ſince dead) on the High-way, and taking from him a Gold Watch and 7 Guineas in Money, near *Blackheath*, ſome-time in *February* in the Year 1757. We have be-fore given an Account of the Manner of this Rob-

bery

bery, and therefore need not trouble the Reader by repeating it.

The chief Evidence againſt him was a Woman, a Relation to a Pawnbroker in *London*, who depoſed that the Watch produced in Court, *Page* pledg'd with her for a Sum of Money. She alſo ſwore to the Identity of his Perſon, alſo to his Dreſs, and that he then had a Sword by his Side.

The Fact being plainly proved againſt him, the Jury brought him in Guilty Death.

One Mr. *Douglas* was taken up and proſecuted for this Robbery, tho' entirely innocent, and had ſufficient Proof of his being in another Place at that Time.

John Birt, a Soldier was tried and found Guilty of breaking the houſe of *William Bacon*, in *Rocheſter*.

Page and *Birt* were both carried to *Pennenden Heath*, and executed together. A Clergyman attended them at the Place of Execution and pray'd there. *Page* gave ſome Money to the Executioner and talk'd to him ſome time.

He made his laſt Exit on the fatal Tree with great Reſolution and Firmneſs; no Dejection or Terror appear'd in his Countenance; and his Behaviour was decent, and becoming the Solemnity of the Occaſion.

As to the particular Circumſtances that attended his Execution, we have them related in the following humorous Paragraph in one of the News Papers.

Page, the Gentleman Highwayman, who was executed on *Thurſday*, *April 6*, on *Pennenden Heath*, was thirty-three Years of Age on *Tueſday* before his Execution. He was formerly u

on Trial with a Printer of Eminence in this City, but being a ſmart Fellow and of an aſpiring Genius, he looked upon that Employment as too mean for one of his Spirit; and was ſo infatuated with the Notion of his being a Gentleman, that he carried the Quixotiſm of Gentility to the Gallows. Having fee'd the Executioner to grant him all the Marks of Honour the Gallows can afford, he therefore was indulged with giving a Signal, which was, the dropping of a Cambrick Handkerchief; and has eſtabliſhed a Precedent for treating Gentlemen with Decency; for inſtead of being cut down as your common Horſe and Sheep-Stealers are *Jack* was at as much Pains in looſing the Knot that deprived the World of this great Man, as if he had been his own Brother.——How he filled the intermediate Space of Time, *the Reader has already ſeen*, and let it ſuffice Poſterity to know, that his firſt Breath he drew at *Hampton*, and his laſt at *Maidſtone*.

As the following Letters, which he wrote to his Wife and Mother, the Morning of his Execution, diſcovers his real Sentiments, and the true Temper of his Mind at the near Aphroach of Death, I ſhall give them the Reader without any Comment, and ſo conclude this Narrative.

My Dear,

I *Am now going to remove from the Stage of this World, and in a few Hours I ſhall be depriv'd of Life, and you of a Husband. 'Tis true, you will have no great Occaſion to mourn for one, who, ever ſince our Marriage, has been a conſtant Terror and Plague to you. But it is now too late*

to

o talk of what is paſt, neither does it avail to tell you, how much I wiſh that my Behaviour to ſo good a Wife had been more agreeable to that Affection and Tenderneſs which you always expreſſed to the worſt of Husbands. I am now too fatally convinced of the Weight of your Arguments, by which you endeavour'd to reclaim me from thoſe pernicious Courſes, which you truly prophecied would in the End prove my Ruin. The near Approach of Death has given me a quite different View of Things from what I ever had before.

My laſt and dying Requeſt to you is, to take Care of our poor Children, and to give them ſuch an Education as may enable them to live by their honeſt Induſtry. Baniſh from their tender Minds all Notions of Gentility and the Affectation of appearing in a Rank of Life to which they have no Pretentions, the fatal Rock on which their unhappy Father unfortunately ſplit. I muſt bid you a long, and everlaſting Farewel, and remain while I have Breath,

Your affectionate,

April 6, *Tho' moſt unfortunate Husband,*
1758. WILLIAM PAGE.

HONOURED MOTHER,

IT is with the utmoſt Shame and Confuſion that I preſume to ſend you theſe few Lines. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the Diſtreſs I feel in my Breaſt, when I reflect on your Tenderneſs, and my own Diſobedience, and the wicked and profligate Life I have led almoſt from my Infancy. I now ſee (but alas! too late) the Juſtneſs of your Reproofs, and the Wiſdom of your Exhortations, and my Diſobedience in turning a Deaf Ear to all your kind Admo-

nitions.

tions. The view of approaching Death exhibits a Scene which never entered my Imagination before.

These Reflections make me wish to die, and yet the near Prospect of Death strikes Daggers to my Soul. Death indeed, of itself, is nothing, but the eternal hereafter that follows, astonishes me beyond Measure. What! have I so long escap'd the Justice of my Country, brav'd the Laws, and set both God and Man at Defiance, to be at last brought before a Judge, who not only intimately knows all the Wickedness of my Heart and Hands, but who has Power and Will to punish me to the utmost of my Demerits.

I heartily bless God, for the short Space of a few Days that he has given me to make my Peace with him. I hope I have made good Use of that unmerited Indulgence. My last and most earnest Prayer, is that you may be happy both in this World and the next,

10 III. 52

I am, I wish I could say your dutiful,

Your most unfortunate Son,

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FINIS.

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